

Spot Checking

Food ★ Fun ★ Frolic
By Bill Whitman



Rest Period...

So better ye should get thy rest, too, now while you can 'cause right now you have time to catch your breath between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Y'know next week will probably begin the big rush for most people in preparation for the arrival of old St. Nick. At least that's always the case at our mance.

There'll be a whole bunch more people out looking for spots to eat on Christmas just as they were on Thanksgiving and we'll try to keep you posted.

Now then it's always delightful, no matter what holiday, to visit **The Matador Restaurant** on West Pico, where you are food-bent or pleasure-bent. Owner-host Bill Fremont always presents the very tops in the classic foods-of-Spain department and if you haven't availed yourself of this exciting cuisine you have something to which to look forward. (Oh boy! Get this guy's articulate word usage, will ya?)

And in the entertainment field at **The Matador**, there have been two new Flamenco dancers added to the cast of the sensational and authentic Spanish floor show in the Flamenco Room of this popular West Side dinery. They are Pedro Tirado and Maruja.

Pedro, who is no newcomer to the Matador patrons, has just finished a starring engagement in Las Vegas and is returning here "by popular demand." Maruja is making his initial appearance at **The Matador**.

By the way, many people often ask "What's in a margarita?" Well the next time they ask it just tell 'em it consists of an ounce and a half of tequila, an ounce of lime juice and an ounce of Cointreau and you serve it in a chilled cocktail glass after rimming it with salt. That's

the way Kiki Garnica, bartender extraordinaire at **The Matador** makes it and according to the many patrons here, Kiki's margaritas are the best available north of the Rio Grande.

Kiki, as you know, is a former bullfighter turned bartender but don't go looking for his little pigtail. Those are "attached" in the present-day bull ring, y'know. Not being a margarita fan, we can't tell you first hand about Kiki's concoctions (the makes a swingin' scotch and soda and a wild gin and tonic, tho) but there's one thing to which we can attest. Both he and his running mate, Jesse, downstairs in the **Flamenco Room** are a pair of the fastest and most courteous bartenders we've met in some time. Accurate, too!

Hey! What is all this jazz we heard about the **Pen and Quill Restaurant** and **Hotel** being "down the tubes"?!?!? Such a bunch of hog wash!

You can take it from here, nothing could be farther from the truth! **The Pen and Quill** is definitely very much in the running and has been for quite some time, now. In fact, since Pat O'Daly took over there as managing director of the **Pen and Quill**, they've not enjoyed such enviable business since the death of Bob Ruben created a rather unhappy crimp in the business. But that crimp has now

been removed and the **Pen and Quill** is going bigger and better than ever, promoting new foods, new entertainment, new features, all the time.

True, the **HOTEL** itself was in pretty bad straits for a time but the **Pen and Quill Restaurant** is STILL DOING BUSINESS! Now how's that grab you? They still buy and prepare top quality food and the executive chef, Kris Erlandsen still runs as fine a kitchen as there is anywhere around. Now that isn't to say that other fine dining spots around of comparable quality aren't good. They are! But it's just such "blanket statements" such as the above—"so-and-so is closed"—that hurts business. Not only the business of the company named but ALL operators in the same type of enterprise... that of serving the public.

So the next time you hear someone say "so-and-so is closed" or "in trouble," or "this place or that place has gone chapter 11" (or 10) don't be a magpi and go along with the bunch. Check it out for yourself! How do you check it out? Why simply GO there! That's how! Do you think for a second that the **Pen and Quill Restaurant** would be running ads in this paper if they were "down the tubes"?

One other thing... we can tell you first hand about the food and service, etc., etc., at the **P and Q**. We've dined there many times, both lately and of yore, and can sincerely vouch for the quality, quantity and price offered here at this charming Manhattan Beach spot.

Those complete ranch style chicken dinners on Sundays, for example. It's five bucks for two, six-seventy-five for three, eight-forty for four, and so on. The top price is \$9.75 for five people and for each additional person it's an extra one for ninety-five. Now how can you dine any better or more reasonable than that!

Oh, and by the way, guys! Make a sly reservation for yourself (or selves) for a Fashion Luncheon Show on Tuesday, Dec. 5 at 11:30 in the ayem. That's like next Tuesday-noon, y'know and it's the **Pen and Quill's** regular famous pre-holiday fashion show. Never can tell what you can pick up for the little woman on these occasions and it gives you the opportunity to select some garment or other without some nosy neighbor lady sitting at the next table who'll run and tell her what she's getting for Christmas. Y'see, guys don't tell, 'cause they're doing the same thing.

Betty Poe is presenting this yearly event and you can get reservations by calling either SP 2-2257 or FR 9-2477. That former number, by the way,

is the one you call for reservations at the special gourmet dinner, too. They're available for groups up to 50 at the **Pen and Quill Restaurant** and Chef Erlandsen will use the recipes he used when he served the last Chef Cuisine meeting. So g'wan down to the **Pen and Quill** and have a ball. Live a little!

Guess you know the **Forum** is finally going to be put to use. Yep, beginning Thursday, Jan. 4, the 23rd edition of **Holiday On Ice** is scheduled to get under way for a 15-performance booking at the long-awaited **Forum** at Manchester and Prairie in Inglewood.

Billed as The World's Greatest Ice Spectacular, **Holiday On Ice** will present seven dazzling productions featuring a huge cast of international skating champions and stars. It'll run through Jan. 14 and at prices even you and you can afford. Like for instance, \$2.50, \$3, \$3.50, \$4 and \$5. There'll be both matinee performances as well as evening.

If you want any further information on the **Holiday On Ice** thing, just call 749-7066 in L.A. Oh, and also, there are group party rates available, in case you want to make it a bunch. Plus there are junior rates available on certain days so get going and order your choice pews now.

It's a family affair at **La Ronda**, you know! At least when the Christmas time rolls around and let's face it—it's all but rolled around!

In Mexico it's called **Las Posadas** when the whole family gets into the act and especially the kids with their free-swinging sticks, breaking open the Pinata and gathering up the goodies that fall there with every swing of the stick and then the mad scramble. Wear your old clothes, kids!

Las Posadas is to be held from Dec. 2 (that's like this coming Saturday) through 24, which will bring it up to Christmas Eve, in case you hadn't taken time to count.

The spirit of Christmas will be brought to the entire family in this beautiful and colorful presentation, and, as our South-of-the-Border neighbors put it — "Muy especial for all the ninos." (Wonder what

that means!) It'll be a song and dance festival that everyone can enjoy, both young and old. Yes, even you middle ones!

And last Monday noon, we had the pleasure of luncheon with owner-singing host **Ben Cruz** and he informs us that he has "the best Mariachi band in all of Los Angeles." Now we can't vouch for this first hand as we've never heard them but this **Ben Cruz** seems to know what he's talking about so we'll just have to go along with him and say the same thing. At least until we get a chance to hear them ourselves.

This **Mariachi Fiesta** group is on hand, incidentally, every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday night so make it by one nite soon.

Back to the **Posadas** bit for a minute — it's strongly suggested you start right now, making reservations for this event 'cause they're going to go fast! Just call them at 652-0774 and some of the **Cruz** family'll take care of your need, whether it be **Ben**, his lovely wife **Maria**, or even **Ricky** or **Lisa**. Between the whole bunch of them, you should be able to get some kind of action.

La Ronda is now located on **Robertson Boulevard** about halfway between **Olympic** and **Wilshire** in **Beverly Hills**—on the site of the old **Castle Restaurant** and later it became **Delmonico's**.

You might also remember **La Ronda** as being at 77th Street and Western—Right? Well, it's the same outfit only now in a new location. Swing by and try 'em!

There are no skeletons in **Shirley's Closet** and if you don't believe this just stop by **Sam Falla's San Francisco** on **Sepulveda** at **Crenshaw** in **Torrance** next Thursday (or any Thursday, for that matter) and watch **Shirley** and her girls put on a fashion show that won't quit!

They begin parading their gowns along about 12 o'clock noon and continue 'til "who knows when?" There'll be Italian knits, original handknits, the whole shot and you can pick and choose 'til your heart's content.

Meanwhile, enjoy one of those sumptuous luncheons offered at **The San Francisco**



LAS POSADAS . . . This is typical of the colorful fiesta, you'll experience when you visit **La Ronda** on **Robertson Blvd.** in **Beverly Hills** the first part of December. It's a Christmas thing in Mexico and shown above are, left to right, **Lillian Corral**, "Guerro" **Corral**, **Armando Corral**, **Ricky Cruz**, **Maria Cruz**, **Ben Cruz**, and **Lisa Cruz**. (You can see it's a family affair at **La Ronda**!)

and then, if the mood strikes you, hang around for the entertainment in the evening, furnished by **The Johnny Hoover Trio**—it's **Johnny** and his **Henchmen**. You'll like 'em.

Just a line to drop in here and that's regarding the **entertainment** at the **Galley West Restaurant** down there on the tip of the **Palos Verdes Peninsula**.

You've got until — well, like thru this weekend — to catch the swingin' jazz of the **Dave Miller Trio** and then they'll be gone, so make it down there if you can in the next few days.

Opening Tuesday, Dec. 5, it'll be the **Bill Plummer Trio** for your dancing and listening enjoyment. They'll be there for a couple of weeks. Keep it in mind!

Wray's Restaurant on **Crenshaw** in **Gardena** is presenting some fine specials for you these days. Look at Sunday, for instance. It's the **Old Fashioned Stewed Chicken** with all the trimming for a buck twenty-nine. Then they

are following this one up on Monday with a **Salisbury Steak** special for ninety-nine cents; Tuesday features the **Roast Prime Rib of Beef** for one eighty-nine; Wednesday, Thursday is **Family Nite Special** from five o'clock 'til nine with an "all you can eat" spaghetti deal with all the fixin's for the same price as the Tuesday deal (confused yet?) and then on Saturday there's the **Steak Festival of T-Bone Steak** for one sixty-nine, complete. You really can't pass up deals like this, now can you?

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La Ronda (Formerly at 77th & Western) proudly presents **LAS POSADAS** from **Dec. 2nd thru Dec. 24th** RESERVATIONS SUGGESTED 652-0774 Your Singing Host—**Ben Cruz** **MARIACHI FIESTA** Every Wed., Fri. and Sat. 828 S. Robertson Bl., Beverly Hills (Between Olympic & Wilshire)

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CROWN PRINCESS . . . William Nehrenz of **Ungar Electric Tool Company**, left, and **Bob Michael**, crown **Mary Greene**, sales award winner "Princess" at a luncheon recently for electronics executives at the **Marquis Restaurant** on the **Sunset Strip**.